

WENDY L. WATANABE CHIEF DEPUTY

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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October 23, 2007

TO:

Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman

Supervisor Gloria Molina Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke Supervisor Don Knabe

Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM:

J. Tyler McCauley

Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT:

GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT - CHILDREN'S

HOMES OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA - BAIRD, RUNNYMEAD,

SHOUP, VALERIO AND VICTORY GROUP HOMES

We have completed a review of Baird, Runnymead, Shoup, Valerio and Victory Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Children's Homes of Southern California, Incorporated. Each Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Baird, Runnymead, Shoup, Valerio and Victory Group Homes are each six-bed facilities, which provide care for boys ages 11-18 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Baird, Runnymead, Shoup, Valerio and Victory Group Homes were each providing services for six DCFS children.

All five Group Homes are located in the Third District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews

Board of Supervisors October 23, 2007 Page 2

with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address a few deficient areas.

All five Group Homes need to provide sufficient recreational activities.

Baird and Valerio Group Homes need to train all staff to treat children with respect and dignity and monitor their interactions.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

JTM:DC:CC:asl

Attachments

William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
 Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
 Susan Kerr, Chief Deputy Director, DCFS
 Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
 Jorge C. Marquez, Executive Director, Children's Homes of Southern California Public Information Office
 Audit Committee

Children's Homes of Southern California Baird Group Home Reseda, Califonia 91335 License Number: 191221601

Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment - Observation

Comments:

Baird Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest. However, the Group Home does not provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

1. Children's Homes of Southern California management provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment - Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. However, children express a lack of satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that some of the staff members do not always treat them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

2. Children's Homes of Southern California management provide on-going staff training and ensure that all staff treat children with respect and dignity.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

Children's Homes of Southern California Runneymede Group Home Van Nuys, California 91405 License Number: 191221595

Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment - Observation

Comments:

Runneymede Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest. However, the Group Home does not provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

1. Children's Homes of Southern California management provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment - Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

Children's Homes of Southern California Shoup Group Home West Hills, California 91307 License Number: 197601995

Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment - Observation

Comments:

Shoup Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest. However, the Group Home does not provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

1. Children's Homes of Southern California management provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment - Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

Children's Homes of Southern California Valerio Group Home Van Nuys, California 91405 License Number: 191221575

Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment - Observation

Comments:

Valerio Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest. However, the Group Home does not provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

1. Children's Homes of Southern California management provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment - Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. However, children express a lack of satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that some of the staff members do not always treat them with respect and dignity.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

2. Children's Homes of Southern California management provide on-going staff training and ensure that all staff treat children with respect and dignity.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

Children's Homes of Southern California Victory Group Home West Hills, California 91307 License Number: 191222471

Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment - Observation

Comments:

Victory Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest. However, the Group Home does not provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

1. Children's Homes of Southern California management provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment -Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment - Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

September 25, 2007

Ms. Candace Rine, Group Home Audit Supervisor Department of Auditor-Controller, Kenneth Hail of Administration 500 W. Temple St., Room 515-A Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Ms. Rhue:

This is corrective action plan (CAP) for the Program Audit Report dated May 9, 2007 for the following five group homes of Children's Homes of Southern California (CHSC): Baird Group Home, Runneymede Group Home, Shoup Group Home, Valerio Group Home and Victory Group Home. Each of the following bullets represents a recommendation, the current status (implemented or not implemented), the corrective action taken to implement the recommendation, title of person responsible for implementing the corrective action(indicated by (1)), and the title of the person that ensures the CAP remains implemented (indicated by (2)).

Baird Croup Home:

- CHSC management provide children with sufficient recreational activities. Implemented.
 CHSC has added more recreational activities to Agency Program.
 - (1) Facility Manager II
- (2) Program Manager
- CHSC management train and monitor all staff to treat children with respect and dignity.
 Implemented. Agency provided training on Resident w/Fairness, Respect & Dignity on May 4, 2007. Agency will provide on-going training and munitoring of all staff to treat children with respect and dignity.
 - (1) Program Manager (2) Executive Director.

Runneymede Group Home:

- CHSC management provide children with sufficient recreational activities. Implemented.
 CHSC has added more recreational activities to Agency Program.
 - (1) Facility Manager II
- (2) Program Manager

Shoup Group Home:

- CHSC management provide children with sufficient recreational activities. Implemented.
 CHSC has added more recreational activities to Agency Program.
 - (1) Facility Manager II
- (2) Program Manager

Valerio Group Home:

- CHSC management provide children with sufficient recreational activities. Implemented.
 CHSC has added more recreational activities to Agency Program.
 - (1) Facility Manager II
- (2) Program Manager
- CHSC management train and monitor all staff to treat children with respect and dignity.
 Implemented. Agency provided training on Resident w/Fairness, Respect & Dignity on May
 4, 2007. Agency will provide on-going training and monitoring of all staff to treat children with respect and dignity.
 - (1) Program Manager (2) Executive Director.

Victory Group Home:

- CHSC management provide children with sufficient recreational activities. Implemented.
 CHSC has added more recreational activities to Agency Program.
 - (1) Facility Manager II
- (2) Program Manager

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this CAP please do not hesitate to call me at (818) 592-2960.

Sincerely,

Jorge C. Marquez, Executive Director